

**MIDWIFERY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

February 5, 2002

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

PRESENT: Morgan Martin, LM, ND
Marijke van Roojen, LM
Leslie Gesner, LM
Jennifer Durrie, Public Member

STAFF PRESENT: Paula Meyer, Executive Director
Kendra Pitzler, Program Manager
Shamim Noormuhammad, Administrative

Assistant Sandra Prideaux, Investigator

OTHERS PRESENT: Shaheeda Pierce
Polly Taylor
Jeanette Zaichkin
Pam Lovinger

OPEN SESSION:

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:50 a.m.

1.1. Approval of Agenda

Agenda approved as written.

1.2. Approval of Minutes - October 9, 2001

The minutes were approved with minor corrections.

2. Standard of Practice

Paula Meyer started the discussion surrounding Midwifery Standards of Practice. She informed the committee that Jane Beyer (house staff) and Representative Eileen Cody have approached the department to explore the option to pursue rule making for Midwifery Standards of Practice. This is in response to midwives concerns about their high fees. Ms. Meyer explained that the department feels it would be beneficial to have the Standards of Practice in the rules for clear definitions. She stated that currently there are no clear definitions in the rules and it is difficult to investigate and prosecute the cases. The prosecuting assistant attorney generals currently have problems prosecuting cases without the help of an expert witness to review the case and testify. This creates additional costs to the program.

Ms. van Roojen stated that she met with Jane Beyer, Representative Eileen Cody, and Representative Laura Ruderman on February 4, 2002. She said the meeting was very productive. Ms. van Roojen stated that she was told that the department provided complaint report comparing midwifery profession with the massage therapist profession. She felt that it was unfair and misleading to compare midwifery with massage therapist because massage therapist does not have same level of complexity. Pam Lovinger indicated that the information sent to legislators was specifically requested from those offices. The Department did not pick the massage therapist profession to compare to midwives, it was requested.

The committee wanted to know whether the midwives have higher rates of complaints against them as compared to like-profession. The staff clarified that the complaint rates for midwives is 2.4% compared to 3% across the profession.

Ms. Prideaux informed the committee that currently she uses few different guidelines when she investigates midwifery cases. She stated that she uses MAWS Guidelines, ACNM Core Competency Guidelines and MANA Guidelines. She shared the ACNM Home Birth Practice Book with the committee, which she refers to during investigation. The committee felt the book was too old and not very useful with the midwifery investigations. Ms. Prideaux stated that she has been checking the ACNM web site for updated version.

The committee discussed the practice guidelines at length and explored ideas and options to have some mechanism of quality improvement process in place.

Ms. Zaichkin stated that the same topics were discussed during the Perinatal Advisory Committee on Out of Hospital Births meeting. She stated they also explored ideas of having some mechanism for quality improvement process in place for midwives.

The committee, after exploring ideas and options agreed that it would be beneficial to have clear standards and guidelines in place. This would give the department and the licensee clear definitions and understanding of the midwifery practice. The committee proposed and approved the following items:

- Begin a rule writing process that would reference guidelines and standards developed outside of rule, such as, the Midwives Association of Washington State's Practice Guidelines.
- Modifying rules regarding legend drugs and devices to list both inclusions and exclusions.
- All applicants for licensure should be provided with all laws pertaining to midwifery practice in Washington State.
- The department and the committee continue to monitor future spending and look at costs saving measures.

3. Budget Review

The committee reviewed the Interim Operating Reports. Paula Meyer reported that the midwifery program is currently in deficit due to recent discipline costs incurred by the program. The program incurred the costs of prosecution and the expert reviewers due to complexity of the cases.

Kendra Pitzler shared the information regarding other licensing professions discipline costs. She compared the costs of professions that are similar to the midwifery profession. She explained that midwifery investigative and discipline costs compared to other professions are not very high but it seems high because 116 people have to share the costs.

4. Continued Competency

Jennifer Durrie reported that she spoke to Jane Kelsi of British Columbia regarding continued competency requirements and also checked out their web site. She shared with the committee the document titled "Model of Midwifery Practice" that she found on their web site. The document describes the different phase of midwifery practice. The committee reviewed the document and recommended that they need to see more information. Ms. Durrie agreed to do further research and report back.

Kendra Pitzler also shared a model of continuing competency from the College of Nurses of Ontario, which is the regulating entity for nurses in Ontario. It was noted that this process could be valuable but cumbersome and that peer review was not currently sanctioned for home birth. The Committee would like to see a model that is not set up for nurses but, instead, a model that is set up for independent practitioners.

5. Retired Active Status

Ms. van Roojen reported that she and Dr. Brown did not have a chance to talk about the retired active status issue. She said that in light of the fee increase she felt the retired active status option looked very attractive and a quick solution for midwives who have low birth volume. However, she stated that she has changed her mind regarding the retired active status since it deals only with midwives who are either retired or who have an extremely limited practice. This would present problems in determining who met the qualification and verifying that only those midwives who did meet qualifications were using this. In addition, it appeared that the intent of the law was to make sure there are enough providers in emergent situations and was not intended for use as an "inactive" status. Ms. vanRoojen asked that this not be pursued any further.

It was noted that the Committee still needs to be aware of the importance of the survivability of rural midwives and find solutions to make sure they can stay in business as well as ways to make sure they stay competent. The Committee asked that staff collect the numbers of midwives who let their license expire since the fee increase. This will be brought to the next meeting.

6. School Approval.

Staff presented the Midwives Education Accreditation Council's (MEAC) standards and the Midwives Alliance of North America's (MANA) core competencies for basic midwifery, which describe the required curricular areas that each school must provide to be accredited by MEAC. It was suggested that this could be used to determine if MEAC accreditation meets Washington standards and could be used for school approval.

It was noted that there is also a handbook, which would give the Committee more information. The Committee requested that this book be obtained before any type of review was initiated.

7. Orientation for New Committee Members.

Kendra Pitzler presented the new member handbook to Leslie Gesner and Jennifer Durrie. In addition, an explanation of what to look for during case reviews was also given them. Ms. Pitzler went over some major points in the handbook and asked that they review the information and call with any questions.

8. Other Announcements and Issues for the Next Meeting.

No announcements were made. However, it was suggested that an item be added to the next agenda. It was indicated that there was concern that the case management panel does not have a committee member and/or midwife on it and that decisions are being made without a peer involved. The Committee asked what it would take to have a midwife added to the Panel and/or what policy prohibits this.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m. Minutes prepared by Shamim Noormuhammad, Administrative Assistant and Kendra Pitzler, Program Manager.